

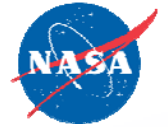


Identifying and Addressing Performance Problems

How to Deal with Poor Performers

Office of Human Capital Management
Employee and Labor Relations Branch
March 2008





Agenda

- Preventing Poor Performance
- Identifying the Problem: Is it Conduct or Performance?
- Performance Improvement Efforts - Providing Opportunity to Improve
 - Informal - Communicating/Documenting Expectations
 - Formal - PIP
 - Taking Action
- Keys to Resolving Performance Problems



Preventing Poor Performance

- Communicate clear performance standards and expectations to employees
- Provide regular and frequent feedback on performance (both positive and negative)
- Reward and recognize good performance - both formally and informally
- Make full use of the probationary or trial periods for new employees



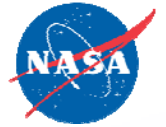
Identifying the Problem: Is it Conduct or Performance?

CONDUCT

- Misconduct is a failure to follow a workplace rule
- Employee won't do the work
 - ▶ Examples:
 - Tardiness/absenteeism
 - insubordination
 - misuse of resources

PERFORMANCE

- Poor performance is failure to do the job at an acceptable level
- Employee can't do the work
 - ▶ Relates to:
 - quantity, quality, timeliness
 - written elements/stds



If There Is a Performance Issue...

- Consult with the Office of Human Capital Management (OHCM) – Xynique R. Sims, 3-2493.
- Review the Performance Plan - clarify or modify as necessary
 - Is there a performance element/sub-element covering the area(s) of concern?
 - Are the standards clear and measurable pertaining to the area(s) of concern?
 - In what areas does the employee need to improve?
 - How is the employee failing?



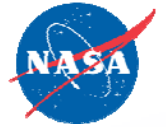
If There Is a Performance Issue...

- Review applicable guides
 - NPR 3430.1C, Chapter 5
 - GLPR 3430.1B, Chapter 4
 - Memorandum of Understanding - Dated 8/15/07
<http://www.grc.nasa.gov/WWW/OHR/mou-epcs.pdf>
 - OPM Publication “Addressing and Resolving Poor Performance”
<http://www.opm.gov/er/poor/opmbroch.pdf>
- Assess Within Grade Increase Impact
- Initiate Performance Improvement Efforts



Within Grade Increases

- Must be fully successful
 - Needs Improvement or Unacceptable – WGI must be Denied
- Normal Notice period – 90 days
 - Explanation of performance issue(s)
 - What is required to be full successful
- Issue new Performance Appraisal/Notice of Denial
 - Second level management concurrence
- Deny WGI
- Continuing evaluation
- Supporting documentation required



Performance Improvement Efforts: Addressing and Resolving Poor Performance

Step 1: Informal - Communicating and
Documenting Expectations

Step 2: Formal - PIP

Step 3: Taking Appropriate Action

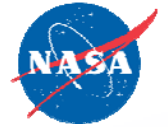




Step One: Informal

- Methods of Communicating and Documenting Expectations
 - Performance Plan
 - Operating Procedures - ISO procedures, guides, manuals, professional requirements, etc.
 - Counseling - clarify expectations and discuss performance problem
 - Verbal Counseling
 - Written instruction

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Step One: Informal

- Preparing for the Counseling
 - Review the Performance Plan
 - Review Position Description for Accuracy
 - Obtain advice from OHCM on the adequacy of the performance elements/standards
 - Review NPR/GLPR documentation on performance





Step One: Informal

- Identify your expectations for acceptable performance
 - Clarify what is in the standards
 - Explain/clarify Operating Procedures
 - Give examples of how the employee's work needs to improve
 - Give examples of how the employee's work is failing to meet expectations
 - Explain acceptable performance
 - Explain what assistance will be provided



Step One: Informal

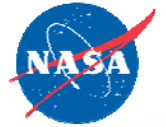
- Conducting Counseling Session
 - Notify employee of the purpose of the meeting prior to the scheduled date/time
 - Conduct meeting in a private area
 - Arrange adequate time for your comments and dialogue with the employee
 - Set and maintain a constructive tone - focus on how employee's performance impacts organization

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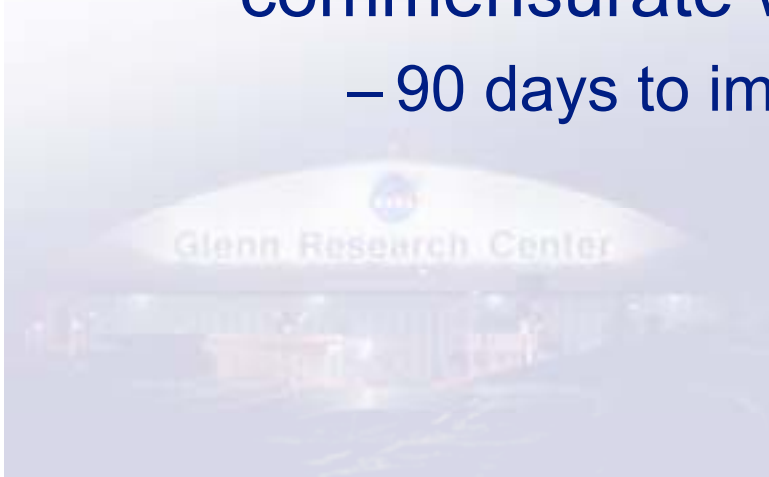
Step One: Informal

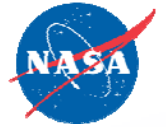
- Inform employee of the following:
 - He/she needs improvement in (give examples)
 - He/she is failing to meet expectations (identify elements)
 - How he/she is failing by giving examples
 - Outline the performance expectations and seek confirmation that employee understands
 - Explain the assistance that will be provided
 - Encourage the employee to be active in the discussion
 - Stress mutual goal - to improve employee's performance
 - Document discussion - give employee copy
 - Follow-up! Provide additional feedback to employee (both positive and negative)
 - Refer to EAP if warranted



Step Two: Formal

- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) - formal opportunity to improve unacceptable performance
- Duration of Opportunity Period - must provide reasonable opportunity to improve commensurate with job duties
 - 90 days to improve performance

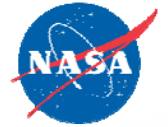




Step Two: Formal

- Issue PIP Warning Letter that states:
 - critical element employee is failing
 - how employee is failing to meet expectations
 - what must be done to meet expectations
 - what assistance will be provided
 - consequences of failing to improve

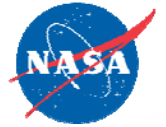




Step Two: Formal

- Providing Assistance
 - On the job training
 - Formal training
 - Assigning a mentor/coach
 - Establishing job aide tools
 - Closer supervision

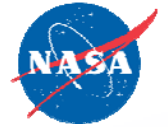




Step Two: Formal

- Union representatives may attend meetings held to discuss performance during PIP
- Monitor Performance during PIP
 - review work products on regular basis
 - provide timely feedback
 - maintain records
 - ensure all assistance promised is provided

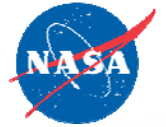




Step Two: Formal

- **Special Considerations**
 - Reasonable Accommodation Requests
 - Get advice/assistance from the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs and/or OHCM
 - Must be qualified disabled person and accommodation must not create undue hardship on organization
 - Can put accommodations in place at same time as PIP

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Step Two: Formal

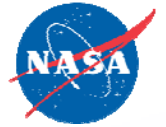
- **Special Considerations** (continued)
 - Take into account issues that are outside of employee's control
 - Requests for Leave during PIP
 - Cannot penalize employee on approved leave for not completing work during that time
 - Ensure leave requesting procedures are followed
 - May need to extend PIP if on leave for significant period



Step Three: Taking Appropriate Action

- If employee fails to meet expectations during PIP action must be taken to:
 - Reassign
 - Change to Lower Grade (Adverse Action)
 - Remove (Adverse Action)
- Other Actions
 - Probationary/Trial Period Termination
 - Withholding a Within-Grade Increase

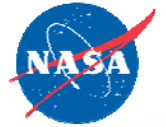
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Dealing with Performance Issues

Timeline

- Must provide
 - 90 days on PIP
- Adverse Action Process
 - Proposed Action Issued
 - 30 day advance notice period
 - Adverse Action can not be effected prior to the 30 day advance notice period
 - Employee has 30 calendar days to respond
- If unacceptable performance reoccurs within 1 year of PIP, do not have to start process over



Keys to Resolving Performance Problems



- Early Identification of Performance Problem
- Constructive Counseling (informal)
- Performance Improvement Period (formal)
 - clarify expectations
 - provide assistance
- Take necessary action



Resources

- OHCM:
 - Lori O. Pietravoia 3-2506
 - Anita L. Arnold 3-8658
 - Deborah A. Maslanka, 3-2456
 - Xynique Sims 3-2493
- NPR 3430.1C
- GLPR 3430.1B
- Office of Human Capital Management Web Site
<http://www.grc.nasa.gov/WWW/OHR/>
- Office of Personnel Management Web Site
<http://www.opm.gov>